1. This update is based on the Army-wide, MDCPDS Deployment Conference, held at Aberdeen Proving Ground, 7-10 February 2000, and is geared to USACE commands, HR offices and CPACs. Please freely distribute this information within your activities, as you see fit. *[Ed. note: slides used at the conference are available at the Modernization page, on http://www.cpol.army.mil –jl]*

2. **Carole Johnson**, Chief, Regionalization Project Management Office (RPMO) opened the conference in this vein: "Our continued success is directly related to our collective ability to support one another." This command fully supports and encourages this statement, and we will do everything we can to support all Corps activities and The Army during the upcoming modernization. We call on all of you to help, by involving your co-workers, customers and commanders in this effort, keeping them informed, and helping your colleagues in other divisions and districts profit from your experience.

3. As described in previous reg/mod updates, the transition to the Modern Defense Civilian Personnel Data System (MDCPDS) will bring many changes. However, **Tony Whitehouse**, Acting Director at the Pacific Region's Civilian Personnel Operations Center (CPOC), in a recent briefing to the CEHR staff, noted that "90% of these changes will affect the CPOCs, versus the CPACs." Whitehouse should know, since the Pacific Region was the first to stand-up MDCPDS. This same figure was repeated at the MDCPDS Conference. There will be far fewer changes for Civilian Personnel Advisory Centers (CPACs) and managers, and this is, of course, good news. However, there are many things the CPACs can do to prepare, and make the coming transition smoother.

10 Things CPACs can do to prepare:

> (1) Involve your customers and commanders. Make sure they are aware of the coming changes, and especially about cut off dates for processing personnel actions.

(2) Develop a simple plan for all involved (customers and staff), helping everyone see where they fit in, and how the new system will affect <u>them</u>. Remember that everyone needs to see themselves in the picture.

(3) Make sure everyone knows about the blackout period, which will be approximately two weeks. Communicate, communicate, communicate! Once is never enough. There will always be someone who does not get "the word." Remember not to oversell, and be realistic about the impact on service.

(4) Identify "pipeline actions," and reduce their number before cutoff. Fewer personnel actions in the pipeline mean less work for all concerned, and a speedier return to normal after conversion.

(5) Establish training schedules for customers and staff. The Corps participated in reviewing training materials for training of trainers classes. We hope to have several people who can help the MSC HR offices train CPAC staff and their customers. *[Ed. note: we are working on developing a training strategy for conversion, and we will be coordinating this with Corps MSC HR offices and CPACs. More to come on this. --jl]*

(6) Hold a Town Hall meeting, or distribute a memo from your commander notifying everyone of the upcoming changes, and describing the level of support expected from supervisors and managers. *[Ed. note: We will propose the Chief sign just such a memo soon. Hopefully, this will be coming to an e-mail box near you soon! --jl]*

(7) Periodically, brief your leadership on the status of MDCPDS. Make sure that you keep your Information Management staff in the loop, too. Encourage all managers and staff to visit the CPOL website www.cpol.army.mil to remain informed. You might also send them these reg/mod updates!

(8) Obtain help and commitments from your local IMO. This is a team effort, and we cannot succeed alone, as Carole Johnson points out above.

(9) Secure and schedule a training facility sufficient for meeting initial and continuing training needs.

(10) Identify a deployment coordinator, and let us (CEHR-D) know who this person is, so we can keep him/her informed.

Other conference information we learned includes:

4. HQDA, CPMS, CPOC and CPAC transition planning responsibilities have been identified, and published in a 474 item deployment checklist. This checklist will be posted on the CPOL website, modernization homepage.

5. We also learned that the first 2 Army regions (Southeast and North Central) will have a mock conversion done before implementation to help reduce bugs in deployment.

6. According to **Bob Hayden**, Policy & Program Development Division (PPD), Functional Automation Branch (FAB), the quality of legacy data is very important to the conversion process. Once the system is shut down for conversion, the systems people and the CPOCs only have 3 days to correct errors before the transition to the modern system. Obviously, CPACs must help ensure that legacy data is accurate. FAB will run mass changes to correct invalid data, but may not be able to correct *all* errors with these changes. It will take a group effort to ensure that legacy data is correct. HQDA and the Civilian Personnel Operations Center Management Agency (CPOCMA) will be posting DESIRES (dataqueries) on the CPOL website to help you avoid "bombing out" during the conversion process. Please check the Reg/Mod website for these DESIRES and further information.

7. One feature of the modern system is an organization hierarchy. **Sarah**

Graham, PPD, described this as a mandatory, embedded feature of Oracle HR (OHR). The hierarchy depicts the chain of command from the highest DOD element down to the lowest level of the organization with a separate Unit Identification Code (UIC). Organizational changes below the UIC level are not represented in this hierarchy. Every position in Army will have an organizational hierarchy code and this code must be established, and tables built before conversion. CPACs will provide the information to their servicing CPOCs, which will build the tables. Changes and additions to the hierarchy will be initiated by the CPACs, and must be in place *before* personnel actions can take place. The CPOCs will submit change requests to ASA (M&RA), which passes these on to the Civilian Personnel Management Service (CPMS) in San Antonio, for entry into the system. Again, remember that CPACs will not need to initiate system change requests for organization changes *below* the UIC level. HQDA is working on a business process map (BPM) and SOP for managing this process. Army is pursuing the possibility of avoiding the use of organizational hierarchies, however believes we are not likely to obtain relief from this feature. We will let you know if the current situation changes.

Developing an organizational hierarchy in the Corps will be complicated because many of our supervisors supervise individuals in more than one UIC. Unless the system recognizes multiple UICs, our supervisors may have limited ability to view personnel actions for all of their people. Further, a CPAC generalist or an organization's Administrative Officer may also have limited "views" unless their positions can be built into the hierarchy to allow them to view their entire serviced organization.

Army announced a proposed 120 day hold on reorganizations involving UIC changes, so the system hierarchy can be implemented. This may, of course, affect your organization. No decision on this proposal yet, however.

Additionally, questions were raised about Resource Management's responsibility for building organizational hierarchies, but the OASA (FM) declined to accept this responsibility. In any event, we encourage HR personnel to work with their local RMs to obtain help in building local hierarchies.

8. **"Mits" Matsunaga,** Chief, Training Management Division (TMD), CPOCMA, discussed the training strategy for deployment. Key points include:

--CPOCMA will conduct Train-the-Trainer (TTT) sessions for 18 people from each region approximately 8 weeks prior to deployment. These 18, plus the region's Charter Team trainers, form each region's training cadre.

--The cadre will train CPOC and CPAC personelists. The CPAC trainers will then train end users (supervisors, managers, training coordinators), assisted by the CPOCs when necessary.

--CPOCMA, TMD will assist with the training effort by posting tutorials and refresher exercises on the Internet. Additionally, the Charter Team has produced training modules, lesson plans and exercises. CPOCMA also has a training database for on-line training.

--Training times for each audience are estimated below:

TTT training	8-9 days
CPOC staff	2.5 days
CPAC staff	2 days
"Super-users" (Admin. Ofcrs.)	1 day
Supervisors & Mgrs.	1-3 hours
Resource Managers	2 hours
Training Coordinators	2 hours

--System Administrator training has not yet been finalized. Decisions are expected soon.

9. **Life Cycle Replacement (LCR). Mary Kay Woodside**, Project Officer, Civilian Personnel Regionalization (PO-CPR), described the key points of LCR. *[Ed. note: please see reg/mod update #1 for additional information on this, including the deployment schedule. --jl]*

--According to Woodside, the Windows 2000 operating system is in the MOU being sent to each CPAC as a "placeholder." However, Army will *not* migrate to Win2000 until DISC4 testing and certification is completed. *[Ed. note: as we stated in update #1, the Corps' Corporate Information Officer (CIO) has directed that Corps activities should not sign MOUs with Army unless they retract the need to use Windows 2000. Subsequently, Army has agreed to wait for DISC4 testing and approval before implementing this operating system. Therefore, CPACs should note the following on the MOU before signing:*

"The Corps of Engineers will not accept Windows 2000 until testing and certification by the DISC4." This has been approved by Mr. **Wil Berrios**, *CIO.--jl]*

We are working to identify additional "USACE boilerplate, and will keep you informed.

--Those CPACs not scheduled for LCR equipment until after conversion need not worry. Current Army-purchased equipment is compatible with the modern system. Minimum computer configuration requirements are listed on the CPOL website.

--HQDA will not survey CPAC "satellite offices" for equipment. However, CPACs may distribute their equipment to satellite offices.

--CPACs may purchase their own equipment to use with the Army system *but* only for those "over-strength," non-Army authorized positions. (This is a reinterpretation of policy. Previously, *any* computer equipment used with Army's system was considered part of the system infrastructure, and had to be purchased with OPA funding. Now, "over-strength" users (and *only* these users, may use equipment purchased with other funds.) If you do purchase equipment, be advised that DA will not assume responsibility, maintenance, software support, etc., for locally purchased computers.

--Woodside emphasized that only Army can acquire and replace modern system infrastructure equipment. This means that CPACs cannot

purchase <u>anything</u> (hardware or software) for computer equipment obtained with OPA funding by Army. Local Information Management Offices (IMOs) *cannot* replace or upgrade Army-purchased infrastructure equipment. Send requests for any replacement or upgrade needs through your servicing CPOC to PO-CPR. It may be possible to "swap" funding; i.e., Army may be able to swap OMA or other dollars for OPA funding to permit CPACs to purchase additional equipment or upgrades to the system. If you do not have OPA funds, but have other resources and need equipment, send your request to us (HQUSACE, CEHR-D) and we will pass it along to Army. DA cautions that this procedure may not often be possible.

10. There will be both Local National (LN) and Demonstration Projects modules in the new system. (These modules have not yet been completed.) The functionality currently present in the legacy system will be present in MDCPDS. There is a <u>possibility</u> that delays in distributing and testing these modules and other pre-planned upgrades (PPUs) could delay the MDCPDS deployment timetable. While a delay would avoid the need to retro-fit already deployed regions with "late" modules, there is great political pressure to deploy as soon as possible. No decision has been made concerning any delays at this point, and the current schedule (see reg/mod update #2) still stands.

11. Troubleshooting (HEAT) procedures will be renegotiated with the new contractor (Lockheed Martin). Please do not contact CPMS, Lockheed Martin or anyone except the CPOC. CPACs identifying problems should contact their CPOCs which will enter problems into the HEAT system (this is the current procedure).

12. **HQ Systems Update**. **Cindy Cassil**, Chief, Civilian Personnel Information Systems Branch (ISB), reported that the legacy HQ ACPERS system uses Datacom's Dataquery, and is the only source in DOD with all Army civilian data from all regions. In the new system, HQ ACPERS databases will be migrated to Oracle HR. The database will still be called HQ ACPERS, but will use a new data query tool that has not yet been selected. This tool is very intuitive and does not require using Systems Query Language (SQL). Army will be purchasing 1,200 licenses for this tool,

and will distribute them to CPACs, CPOCs and MACOMs. This tool will have web capabilities, and this will make the tool usable by managers.

13.   **Clinger-Cohen Act.** This legislation requires that Federal agencies implement information technology (IT) projects within acceptable costs and within reasonable timeframes and that these projects make tangible improvements in mission performance. Additionally, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy), **Dr. Diane Disney**, has imposed DOD-wide requirements which centralize control of civilian HR automated systems under CPMS, and require an inventory of software being used for personnel purposes. *[Ed. note: This is one reason for the recent data call on automated systems we recently sent to Corps field offices. --jl]*

14. **Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C).** According to **Donna Riney**, the Center at Ft. Riley, KS, uses an interactive voice recognition (telephone) system (IVRS) and "live," trained counselors to provide benefits and entitlements services to Army employees. (Access is available for the deaf (TTD) and through the Internet. There are also two Spanish-speaking counselors available to callers.) ABC-C will provide advisory services and process transactions for Health Benefits (FEHB), Life Insurance (FEGLI), Thrift Savings (TSP), retirement (FERS and CSRS) and survivor benefits. The regional deployment schedule follows:

Southwest	Deployed
North Central	27 Mar 00
ANCR	08 May 00
West	19 Jun 00
Southeast	31 Jul 00
South Central	11 Sep 00
Northeast	23 Oct 00
Europe	TBD
Korea	TBD
Pacific	TBD

ABC-C will provide CPACs training on their services and procedures. For additional information, go to their website: www.abc.army.mil.

We also received a briefing on a number of subjects not related to the modern system. These subjects were briefed by **Betty Throckmorton,** *Chief, PPD, and are covered in paragraphs 15-24, below:*

15. **Staffing Processes Reengineering and Innovations Group (SPRING).** This group was formed to explore 200 suggestions for improvement of staffing processes. Participants include MACOMs, HQDA and CPACs. Their website, www.cpol.army.mil/lucy/secure/spring/index.html is now up and functioning. (Password and Username is "guest.") Please see this site for additional information and draft papers. *[Note: For some reason, USACE did not receive* **Dave Snyder's** (Deputy Assistant Secretary (Civilian Personnel Policy)) *13 Jan 00 memo inviting participation in this initiative. We now have it and will be working with you on this. --jal]*

16**. Resumix status.** Resumix version 4.1 is being upgraded to ver. 5.3. The new version will enable applicants to file a 3 page, versus a 2 page resume. During the two week conversion period, the CPOCs will not issue referrals. However, they will continue to announce vacancies and accept resumes.

17. **Resume builder.** New features are being tested including the ability to save resumes at anytime, additional security and a separate supplemental page for OCONUS sites.

18. **Vacancy Announcements (VA).** Army is pursuing revamping the announcements. An attractive, one-page announcement is planned, with links to additional information (e.g., EEO and OPM mandated information). A draft paper is expected this month.

19. **Forecast/Workforce Planner.** This is a web-based system designed to help project strength/gains/losses. It includes a workforce planner to show projections/targets/actualized by installation/competitive area. The system will flag users to review actions if deviations of 0.5% from target occur during the year.

20. **Fast Classification** (**FASCLASS).** Upcoming enhancements include

incorporation of Position Description (PD) library, identification of positions requiring Army Management Staff College (AMSC))/Senior Service College (SSC) training, a work in progress holding area, organizational "what if" scenarios (showing managers what would happen if specific changes are made), enhanced reporting capabilities and an on-line tutorial. In the future, FASCLASS will eventually link with Resumix, VA Builder, Auto RIF, COREDOC and more. (These are planned for the future.) ***NOTE: this system will be taken down at noon, 1 Mar 00 for upgrading to FASCLASS II, and will be back up on 6 March 2000.*** While the system is down, it will be unavailable to all users.

21. **Position Description (PD) Library.** There are approximately 11,000 PDs listed in this library.

22. **Army Performance Management System (APMS) XXI.** Managers and staff have been reviewing the TAPES performance appraisal system for changes. A number of recommendations are being studied, and are on the web for your review. Changes will be staffed with the field.

23. **Electronic Official Personnel File (EOPF).** This will create, manage, store, transfer, archive and delete documents that are currently housed/filed in the OPF. The goal is to provide on-line demand for employee data, eliminate filing and lost files, and creating user-friendly access to personnel records. Currently, the concept is being finalized and the economic analysis being completed before forwarding to DOD for approval.

24. **Oracle Training Administrator (OTA)** is a paperless system designed to process training from request to history uploading. It is a commercial-off-the-shelf (COTS) product and will replace the legacy system's TRAIN program. Features include electronic routing of requests and approvals, automatic generation of course evaluations for participant and supervisor and printing of the DD-1556 training form. This product is not part of MDCPDS, but is a separate product that will run parallel to the modern system. It will, however, feed course completions into MDCPDS. OTA is **mandatory,** according to **David Snyder**. *[Ed. note: we have*

already addressed the Corps' need to have an interface with CEFMS to avoid duplicate entry of data. We have proposed flowing data directly to HQDA, and will continue pursuing this until we have solved the problem. --jl]

25. **Pat Pearson,** Acting Civilian Personnel Director, US Army Pacific (USARPAC) presented on the MACOM role in managing pre- and post deployment for MDCPDS fielding. Many of her observations also apply to actions MSC HR Directors and CPAC Chiefs can take. Pearson emphasized the importance of marketing to educate customers. She encouraged using the analogy of deploying a major weapons system when explaining the magnitude of this effort to commanders. Let customers know there will be downtime and a learning curve for staff and customers, just as there is with weapons systems deployments. Pearson also noted the need to:

--promote awareness of everyone's role (including managers) in this
        deployment succeeding.
--lobby for needed resources for TDY, overtime and training
--identify problems for resolution (especially communications and
        connectivity)
--closely watch for impact on morale, especially on CPAC staff
--work with IMOs, keeping them involved
--develop staff expertise using the modern system.

26. **Tony Whitehouse**, Acting Pacific CPOC Director, briefed on managing the Pacific region post-deployment. He noted the following key impacts on his region, including:

--production/performance decreases (esp. fill time increases)
--customer interaction increases
--lowered employee morale
--local residency of data (this is new; remember, under MDCPDS, data
        resides at the CPOC, not in San Antonio).

According to Whitehouse, the largest impact of the modern system is on the Personnel Actions Clerks (PACs) at the CPOCs. The impact is not nearly as great on CPACs or managers. He also noted that MDCPDS is easier for PACs

than the legacy system once they learn it. Locating data fields is a big problem, however, and it may be more difficult for managers to print NPAs, if print parameters are not set correctly.

27. **Jessie Lipscomb**, Chief, Information Systems and Training, Pacific CPOC, discussed challenges to the IM community. (Lipscomb volunteered to teleconference with the Southeast region as it stands up.) He explained that the CPOCs are responsible for two databases, on two different servers. On the N-Class server, primary products include the Request for Personnel Action (RPA), formerly known as the SF52, the Notice of Personnel Action (NPA), formerly known as the SF50, and OTA's Training Request Form (TRF), formerly known as the DD-1556. *[Ed. note: much of the current terminology has changed, as seen here. We all have to learn these new terms! --jl]* On the HP 460 servers, primary products are all reports currently available to you in Regional Application (except the SF50 History). This machine will also house the End User Layer (EUL), which is the database that provides information for reports.

Lipscomb also noted that the RPAs, NPAs and TRFs can all be printed by managers and staff from "normal" (i.e., non-IP addressable UNIX printers). Only the CPACs will need these special printers to print reports, and these will be provided by DA to CPACs and EEO offices.

28. **Lee Smoot**, Pacific CPOC, reviewed how the modern system affects functional business processes, Resumix and pay. There will be some changes for the CPACs in workflow and awards processing. For example, all monetary and time off awards require an RPA submitted by the organization through the CPAC, through Budget to the CPOC. Awards justifications are submitted as attachments to the RPA.

Smoot notes that Resumix interface processes work reliably. She recommends users gain experience with Resumix 5.3 well in advance of MDCPDS deployment. Users migrating from version 4.1 should establish custom fields per the DA standard data set. She notes the interface with Resumix will not work unless the data is in the standard configuration.

The payroll interface changes somewhat, but these changes do not affect CPACs. CPOCs will update the Defense Civilian Pay System (DCPS) the current way.

29. **Frank Yencharis,** Chief, Alaska CPAC discussed the modern system from the CPAC perspective. He stressed the importance of maintaining a positive attitude about the changes. Also important:

> --training CPAC trainers
> --limiting the number of trainees per trainer to provide better
> > instruction
> --up-front coordination with IMO
> --partnership with DFAS customer service reps
> --concentrate on the "heavy" or "super" system users (customers)

30. **Stephanie Reed**, a Pacific Region Management Analyst, and "super user," described the changes from her perspective as an "end-user." Although initially extremely frustrated with the new system, Reed has since become adept at using MDCPDS, and has found many beneficial features. Reed liked the ability to attach Word documents and other things to RPAs. Since the RPAs remain electronically available to you after you have coordinated them, there is also no need to keep hard copies of the RPAs. Reed also likes the Manager's Toolkit, to pull NPA histories and the Employee Record Brief. She likes being able to print NPAs and see employee training histories and award/appraisal histories (these are available from the Civilian Servicing Unit (CSU) database, what you now as Regional). *[Ed. note: don't confuse the CSU database with the CSU; DOD's term for the CPAC. --jl]* Reed noted that the personnel action cut-off was not a problem for her, because she had adequate notice, and put in actions needed during the blackout period in advance.

31. According to **Elaine Swearingen,** managers and others interested in developments can go to the a Modernization Homepage within CPOL. There is a new category there, entitled "Deployment Guidance Update," that will provide the latest information on transition/deployment activities.

32. Whew! It was quite a conference, and modernization will be quite an experience for us all. Again, please remember: "Our continued success is directly related to our collective ability to support one another."

33. **E-mails to the Editor:**

*I know this may be considered nit-picky by some, but Windows2000 is NOT the next step up the ladder from Windows98. It is the next step up from WindowsNT. I agree we should avoid Windows2000 at this time on servers. I believe it can be configured for desktops to peacefully coexist with current stuff. --***Robert T. Moss, NWO**

*I'm happy to note that you don't appear to have lost your ability to decomplex highly technical and bureaucratic material. I'm surprised you're still employed at the Headquarters level! --***Mike Mohlere, SER CPOC**

*≫Thanks for cc'ing the IM community in your email. It addressed some of the Win2K/CPAC questions I had. --***Cindy Swift, SPD-IM**

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